

Senate Bill No. 311

CHAPTER 910

An act to amend, repeal, and add Section 52124 of the Education Code, relating to class size, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2004. Filed
with Secretary of State September 30, 2004.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 311, Sher. Education: class size.

Existing law establishes the Class Size Reduction Program, in which participating school districts are provided funding for each class in which the class size is reduced to a ratio of 20 pupils to 1 teacher in kindergarten and any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive.

Existing law requires the Class Size Reduction Program to be implemented in accordance with a prescribed order of priority based on grade level and requires the Controller to deduct a specified amount from the next principal apportionment to the school district for each class that the district failed to reduce to a class size of 20 or less pupils.

This bill would, until July 1, 2009, require the Controller to deduct from the next principal apportionment of the district a specified amount based on the annual pupil enrollment of a class above a different prescribed number.

The bill would authorize a school district located in the County of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, or Ventura to claim class size reduction funding for the 2003–04 school year based on enrollment counts before the October 2003 fires, in those classes if the district lost enrollment due to those fires.

The bill would declare that due to the unique circumstances relating to the Counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura, a general statute cannot be made applicable.

The bill would make other technical changes.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 52124 of the Education Code is amended to read:

52124. (a) A school district that implements a class size reduction program pursuant to this chapter is subject to this section.

(b) A school district may establish a program to reduce class size in kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive, and that program shall be implemented at each schoolsite according to the following priorities:

(1) If only one grade level is reduced at a schoolsite, the grade level shall be grade 1.

(2) If only two grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, the grade levels shall be grades 1 and 2.

(3) If three grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, then those grade levels shall be kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 or grades 1 to 3, inclusive. Priority shall be given to the reduction of class sizes in grades 1 and 2 before the class sizes of kindergarten or grade 3 are reduced.

(4) If four grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, then those grade levels shall be kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive. First priority shall be given to the reduction of class sizes in grades 1 and 2, second priority shall be given to the reduction of class size in kindergarten and grade 3. This paragraph shall be operative only in those fiscal years for which funds are appropriated expressly for the purposes of this paragraph.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature to continue to permit the use of combination classes of more than one grade level to the extent that school districts are otherwise permitted to use that instructional strategy. However, any school district that uses a combination class in any class for which funding is received pursuant to this chapter may not claim funding pursuant to this chapter if the total number of pupils in the combination class, regardless of grade level, exceeds 20 pupils per certificated teacher assigned to provide direct instructional services.

(d) The governing board of a school district shall certify to the Superintendent of Public Instruction that it has met the requirements of this section in implementing its class size reduction program. If a school district receives funding pursuant to this chapter but has not implemented its class size reduction program for all grades and classes for which it received funding pursuant to this chapter, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify the Controller and the school district in writing and the Controller shall deduct an amount equal to the amount received by the school district under this chapter for each class that the school district failed to reduce to a class size of 20 or less pupils from the next principal apportionment or apportionments of state funds to the district, other than basic aid apportionments required by Section 6 of Article IX of the California Constitution.



(e) Except for a school district participating pursuant to subdivision (h) of Section 52122, the amount deducted pursuant to subdivision (d) shall be adjusted as follows:

(1) Twenty percent of the amount to which the district would otherwise be eligible for each class for which the annual enrollment determined pursuant to Section 52124.5 is greater than or equal to 20.5 but less than 21.0.

(2) Forty percent of the amount to which the district would otherwise be eligible for each class for which the annual average enrollment determined pursuant to Section 52124.5 is greater than or equal to 21.0 but less than 21.5.

(3) Eighty percent of the amount to which the district would otherwise be eligible for each class for which the annual average enrollment determined pursuant to Section 52124.5 is greater than or equal to 21.5 but less than 21.9.

(4) The amount deducted pursuant to subdivision (d) for each class for which the annual average enrollment determined pursuant to 52141.5 is greater than or equal to 21.9 shall be the amount of funding the district received for the class pursuant to this chapter.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, a school district located in the County of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, or Ventura may claim funding pursuant to this chapter for the 2003–04 school year based on enrollment counts before the October 2003 fires, in classes for which the class size reduction program is implemented if the following criteria are met:

(1) The school district submits to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a “Request for Allowance of Attendance because of Emergency Conditions” pursuant to Section 46392 and the emergency conditions were caused by the October 2003 fires.

(2) The school district certifies that it suffered a loss of enrollment in classes in which the class size reduction program is implemented and this loss of enrollment is due to the October 2003 fires and would result in a decrease in funding that the district receives pursuant to this chapter.

(g) This section shall be operative until July 1, 2009, and as of January 1, 2010, is repealed, unless a later enacted statute deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. Section 52124 is added to the Education Code, to read:

52124. (a) Any school district that implements a class size reduction program pursuant to this chapter is subject to this section.

(b) A school district may establish a program to reduce class size in kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive, and that program shall be implemented at each schoolsite according to the following priorities:



(1) If only one grade level is reduced at a schoolsite, the grade level shall be grade 1.

(2) If only two grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, the grade levels shall be grades 1 and 2.

(3) If three grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, then those grade levels shall be kindergarten and grades 1 and 2 or grades 1 to 3, inclusive. Priority shall be given to the reduction of class sizes in grades 1 and 2 before the class sizes of kindergarten or grade 3 are reduced.

(4) If four grade levels are reduced at a schoolsite, then those grade levels shall be kindergarten and grades 1 to 3, inclusive. First priority shall be given to the reduction of class sizes in grades 1 and 2, second priority shall be given to the reduction of class size in kindergarten and grade 3. This paragraph shall be operative only in those fiscal years for which funds are appropriated expressly for the purposes of this paragraph.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature to continue to permit the use of combination classes of more than one grade level to the extent that school districts are otherwise permitted to use that instructional strategy. However, any school district that uses a combination class in any class for which funding is received pursuant to this chapter may not claim funding pursuant to this chapter if the total number of pupils in the combination class, regardless of grade level, exceeds 20 pupils per certificated teacher assigned to provide direct instructional services.

(d) The governing board of a school district shall certify to the Superintendent of Public Instruction that it has met the requirements of this section in implementing its class size reduction program.

If a school district receives funding pursuant to this chapter but has not implemented its class size reduction program for all grades and classes for which it received funding pursuant to this chapter, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall notify the Controller and the school district in writing and the Controller shall deduct an amount equal to the amount received by the school district under this chapter for each class that the school district failed to reduce to a class size of 20 or less pupils from the school district's next principal apportionment or apportionments of state funds to the district, other than basic aid apportionments required by Section 6 of Article IX of the California Constitution.

(e) This section is operative on and after July 1, 2009.

SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that due to unique circumstances relating to the Counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura, a general statute cannot be made applicable within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California Constitution.



SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

To provide much needed flexibility to school districts currently deciding whether to end participation in the Class Size Reduction Program, and to timely provide essential relief to school districts in the Counties of Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura that may receive a loss of state funding as a result of the fires that occurred in California during October of 2003, it is necessary that this bill take effect immediately.

